DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 189 660 CS 502 967

AUTHOR Gaske, Paul C.
TITLE The Analysis of Demagogic Discourse: Huey Long's "Every Man a King" Address.
PUB DATE Nov 77
NOTE 29p.: Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Western Speech Communication Association (Phoenix, AZ, November 19-23, 1977).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Discourse Analysis: *Persuasive Discourse: *Political Influences: Political Issues: *Public Speaking: Social Problems: *Speech Communication: Speeches
IDENTIFIERS *Demagoguery: *Long (Huey)

ABSTRACT

The characteristics of demagogic discourse and a methodology appropriate for its analysis can be illustrated by examining Huey Long's "Every Man a King" radio address on February 20, 1934. The demagogue is similar to the revered public figure in that both are mass leaders, charismatic, and heroic. But the demagogue elicits powerful antithetical emotional responses, championing a single cause. Demagogues and their issues become symbolically one idea, one driving force, as in the cases of Joseph McCarthy/The Red Menace and Huey Long/Share Our Wealth. Demagogic discourse typically follows a classic psychological/motivational pattern for persuasion, as outlined by Kenneth Burke. The four-stage development of demagogic discourse includes guilt, victimization, redemption, and salvation. Huey Long's skill in leading his audience through these four stages, given the state of the economy and the relationship between mind and heart, must account in part for the overwhelming success of his address. Much like the great religious leader, Long brought the promise of hope, redemption, and salvation to those most adversely affected by the depression. He created an identity for his followers through their membership in Share Our Wealth societies. As an articulator, Long not only created an identity for his supporters, but he was their mouthpiece, voicing their frustrations, hopes, and fears. (RL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED189660

THE ANALYSIS OF DEMAGOGIC DISCOURSE: HUEY LONG'S "EVERY MAN A KING" ADDRESS

Dr. Paul C. Gaske

San Diego State University

San Diego, CA 92182

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Paul C. Gaske

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Rhetoric and Public Address Interest Group
Western Speech Communication Association Convention

Phoenix, Arizona
November, 1977

CS502967

THE ANALYSIS OF DEMAGOGIC DISCOURSE: HUEY LONG'S "EVERY MAN A KING" ADDRESS

Kenneth Burke, commenting on the necessity for the thorough investigation and analysis of Mein Kampf, noted:

> Here is the testament of a man who swung a great people into his wake. Let us watch it carefully; and let us watch it, not merely to discover some grounds for prophesying what political move is to follow Munich, and what move to follow that move, etc.; let us try also to discover what kind of 'medicine' this medicine-man has concocted, that we may know, with greater accuracy, exactly what to guard against, if we are to forestall the concocting of similar medicine in America.[1]

Burke's remarks transcend the specific case of Adolph Hitler, even as powerful and fearsome as Hitler was. They express a compelling rationale for the investigation of the discourse of any individual who is a genuinely moving force in the affairs of humankind. Of particular interest, however, is that class of individuals who represent a threat to conventions and values of free and reasonable decision-making societal institutions.

While "demagoguery" in its broad sense has been investigated to some extent, the character of the demagogue, the conditions that encourage demagoguery, and the specific rhetorical methods and tactics employed by the demagogue have received scant attention.[2] Moreover, those studies which deal with the analysis of demagogic discourse have been neo-Aristotelian in approach.[3] Neo-Aristotelian criticism fails to isolate or uncover many of demagogic rhetoric's essential attributes, since its emphasis on logical proof precludes truly valid criticism of "nonrational" rhetoric.[4]

This investigation is designed to accomplish two principal objectives. First, the study will attempt to provide a general profile of the demagogue, situational factors which give rise to demagoguery, and characteristics of demagogic discourse with a conceptual framework for its analysis. Second, the investigation will examine the character of Huey Long, the conditions

which surrounded his rise to power, and supply a critical analysis of his "Every Man a King" address of February 20, 1934. This speech, his first national radio broadcast, dramatically introduced the "Share Our Wealth" program to the American public and announced the formation of Share Our Wealth societies.

DEFINING THE DEMAGOGUE[5]

Currently, the term demagogue has regressed to the point where anyone who distorts truth, is involved in politics for personal gain, or represents a threat to the established political order may be considered a demagogue.[6] The overall attitude toward the demagogue taken in this paper is best summarized by T. Harry Williams in his Pulitzer Prize-winning biography, Huey Long:

> I believe that some men, men of power, can influence the course of history. They appear in response to conditions, but they may alter the conditions, may give a new direction to history. In the process they may do great good or evil or both but whatever the case they leave a different kind of world behind them. Their accomplishment should be recognized. I believe Huey Long was this kind of man.[7]

Williams' statement clearly indicates that Huey Long and other demagogues are not figures to be dismissed lightly, for they share many of the characteristics of what may be termed the "revered public figure." Yet they differ in equally critical respects.

The demagogue possesses at least three major characteristics of the revered public figure. The first is that both are mass leaders. This criterion may rest in the legitimate authority of the leader, such as an American President, or in the man's founding of a popular movement.[8] Thus, local rabble-rousers who fail to gain national prominence or a widespread following

are excluded from classification as demagogues. For example, Dennis Kearney achieved considerable short-term success in San Francisco, but was unable to expand his influence beyond that city.[9] It is interesting to note that a demagogue is a "mass leader", consistent with the original meaning of the term "demagogue," as it draws its roots from the Greek words demos ("the people") and agogos ("leader"), or "mass leader."

Huey Long was not a mass leader at the time of the "Every Man a King" address, but he became one shortly thereafter. Within a month of the address, eight hundred thousand had joined Share Our Wealth societies; by September 1935, there were an estimated seven million members.[10] Although Roosevelt won the 1936 election by an unprecedented margin, the outcome in 1935, the height of Long's popularity, was by no means assured. James Farley, Roosevelt's chief political strategist, revealed the results of a secret national poll conducted by the Democratic National Committee designed to measure Long's vote-pulling strength:

> It indicated that, running on a third party ticket, Long would be able to poll between 3,000,000 and 4,000,000 votes. . . . His probable support was not confined to Louisiana and nearby states, On the contrary, he had about as much following in the North as in the South, and he had as strong an appeal in the industrial centers as he did in the rural areas. Even the rock-ribbed Republican state of Maine, where the voters are steeped in conservatism, was ready to contribute to Long's total vote in about the same percentage as other states. . . . It was easy to conceive a situation whereby Long, by polling more than 3,000,000 votes, might have the balance of power in the 1936 election. For instance, the poll indicated that he would command upward of 100,000 votes in New York state, a pivotal state in any national election; and a vote of that size could easily mean the difference between victory or defeat for the Democratic or Republican candidate. Take that number of votes away from either major candidate, and they would come mostly from our side, and the result might spell disaster.[11]

Moreover, Long demonstrated the capability to influence election results outside his immediate political sphere. Raymond Moley noted:

> By late March [1935] the Kingfish was threatening to campaign in states other than Louisiana for 'Share-the-Wealth' candidates. By April the Democratic high command not only expected him to defeat Senator Joseph T. Robinson of Arkansas and Senator Pat Harrison of Mississippi, two of the party's elder statesmen in 1936, but was chewing mustaches over statistics purporting to show that he could make himself political master of the whole, vast Lower Mississippi Valley--perhaps even of great hunks of the West. Who knew where Huey. . .would end?[12]

Huey Long's life ended on the marble floor of the Governor's mansion in Louisiana on September 10, 1935. At the time of his death, though many bemoaned the fact, he was unquestionably a mass leader.

A second common characteristic of the revered public figure and the demagogue is charisma, or the attraction of followers on the basis of personal qualities of the leader.[13] Charisma is exhibited in political figures in two basic forms, which may occur separately or in combination: mastery and representation. The charismatic leader who possesses mastery "is in varying degrees the master of events--one who orders the future."[14] That is, he appears to his followers to be not only a master of destiny, but also a man capable of <u>controlling</u> destiny. This type of charisma can assume several forms. As Raymond E. Spencer explained:

> The charisma of the sage derives from the power of his intellect; the charisma of the general derives from his strategic insight and his willingness to take calculated risks; the charisma of the prince flows from his administrative skill and his ability to manipulate his image and the charisma of the revolutionary leader is a product of his unshakable vision and his persuasive powers.[15]

The charismatic figure may possess one or more of these forms of mastery.[16]

Huey Long's mastery took two forms. The first was the mastery of the sage, one who has the power to create order from chaos. As Spencer writes:

> He [the sage] resolves the existential chaos of reality. He structures a cosmos. He provides guides for action and a premise for the future. . . .The mass of men,

> incapable of achieving order for themselves, are awed by the demonstrated capacity of a great mind to make sense of an incomprehensible reality. The man who can do such things acquires a nimbus of the sacred.[17]

There has scarcely been a more disquieting time in American history than the Great Depression. For literally millions of Americans, their world was disintegrating, whether in the dust bowls of Oklahoma or in the streets of New York. Huey Long reordered and restructured the present world for those oppressed people that they might share in the riches of their country. Whether or not Share Our Wealth was a viable plan is a moot point; Long's sense of divine order created a reverential faith in his followers and an immediate hope in the present.

Long also possessed the mastery of the revolutionary leader. The revolutionary leader generates charisma not with accomplishments of the past, or successes in the present, but "by convincing his followers that <u>his vision of the future will come to pass</u>."[18] Spencer goes on to point out:

> He [the revolutionary leader] is constantly generating and sustaining a revolutionary reality for his followers by his writings and speeches. It is his own unshakable conviction in that reality, his iron will, his demonic energy and the power of his intelligence that envelops his followers in a world-to-be of his own creation. . . .The will and faith of the others may falter, but they return again and again to the inexhaustible fountain of the leader's vision.[19]

Whether Long's conviction was genuine is open to question, but that his followers believed in his messianic powers is not.[20] Schlesinger wrote of the Share Our Wealth program:

> It was, in short, a hillbilly's paradise. . . .It was the Snopeses' dream come true. Long rested his case on rhetoric and the Scriptures. 'I never read a line of Marx or Henry George or any of them economists,' he once said. 'It's all in the law of God.'[21]

By contrast, representation, the second form of charisma, may be said to occur when "the leader structures a universe of values for his followers that satisfies deep-felt needs."[22] In other words, the leader brings a promise of salvation to a troubled people by creating or reinforcing a set of values which maximally meet their needs. He can do so in a variety of ways. The leader may be an innovator, where he creates values which "answer the needs or diffuse the tensions of his agitated following" by reaching "into the historical situation to create a value order that is ripe for the time."[23] The man is not merely a product of his times, though he does capitalize on them. The articulator, a relatively common figure in politics, says what people wish to hear, but cannot or do not know how to say for themselves.[24] The articulator is identified with but not the creator of the value structure. And the symbolizer simply stands for the values he represents, and is thus the perfect example of the group type.[25]

Huey Long was both an innovator and an articulator. Much like the great religious leader, Long brought the promise of hope, redemption, and salvation to those most adversely affected by the depression. He created an identity for his followers through their membership in Share Our Wealth societies. As an articulator, Long not only created an identity for his supporters, but was their mouthpiece, a person who voiced their frustrations, hopes, and fears. As Raymond Gram Swing wrote:

> For his supporting public, Long is the under-dog southern farmer and villager, the suppressed, ignored, unprivileged person. He is the personification of their aspirations and their prejudices. And his appeal will be the same wherever he can display himself to unprivileged people.[26]

The basic difference between mastery and representation is summarized by Spencer: "In the case of mastery the sentiments toward the leader are characterized by awe; in representation those sentiments run in the direction

of enthusiasm."[27] Not all mass leaders are charismatic and all charismatic figures are not mass leaders (although in politics charismatic figures are sufficiently rare as to virtually make them mass leaders by default). All American Presidents are mass leaders, but their leadership often comes from the exercise of legitimate power and not their charismatic qualities.

The third characteristic shared by the demagogue and the revered public figure is the status of popular hero. This characteristic, while more superficial in substance than charisma, nevertheless provides an excellent set of criteria for recognizing political demagogues. Specifically, to qualify as a popular hero, an individual must be:

> (1) a person of fame, as indicated by news-space devoted to him, rumor and legend concerning him, or the fact that everybody knows him;
> (2) a person who is commonly called a hero (or some equivalent or marginal term such as idol, champion, patron saint, martyr); and
> (3) a person who is the object of hero-worship. The criteria for hero-worship are as follows:
> (a) the hero is admired, eulogized, acclaimed, or otherwise honored by his society;
> (b) he is formally recognized or canonized;
> (c) he is commemorated; or
> (d) he has a following of devotees, "fans", or hero-worshippers.[28]

Huey Long was a public hero; he was famous, heroic, and enjoyed hero worship. Thanks to massive press coverage (albeit largely negative) and his national radio broadcasts, Long was certainly a well-known personality. To the poor and disenfranchised, he was a champion; when scourged by the press and the Administration, he became a symbolic martyr. And the tens of thousands of letters Long received daily requesting admission to Share Our Wealth societies was a powerful form of hero worship.[29] The impact of the popular hero is explained by Orrin E. Klapp:

> The special sentimentality of the public toward a popular hero includes a certain endearment, a tremendous loyalty, a reluctance to admit critical reflection, and a faith and veneration which verges upon superstitution. Once a public figure acquires the status of a popular hero, he is to be specially reckoned with as a social force.[30]

Popular heroes assume many guises. One is the "conquering hero," who is characterized by the extraordinary feats he performs, the contests he wins, the tests he overcomes, and the quests he seeks.[31] Another type of popular hero is the "clever hero," who achieves heroic status by defeating a stronger opponent by some means of deception, by using brains over brawn, or wily idealism over crass oppression. In many respects, the clever hero verges upon being a villain, yet he retains the admiration of the people.[32] A third type of hero is a "Cinderella," who succeeds more by luck, hard work, or miraculous assistance than by his innate cleverness.[33] The "delivering hero" characteristically rescues a person or group from danger or distress, as in the belief in a saviour or messiah.[34] The "culture hero" is, as the name implies, an important legendary figure who has made an important contribution to culture or welfare, e.g., Joseph Smith to the Mormon Church.[35] Finally, there is the "martyr," an often-tragic figure who dies heroically, fighting for a cause, characteristically betrayed by his friends or overwhelmed by his enemies.[36]

Huey Long in death was a martyr; in substance he was a delivering hero, a messiah rescuing his followers from the depression, leading them to the promised land of Share Our Wealth. Above all, however, he was a clever hero, a hero in much the same manner that Robin Hood, Don Juan, and Pancho Villa were heroes. Even a cursory examination of Long's gubernatorial career in Louisiana or as a United States Senator reflects this atypical quality. Whether telling legislators that he could buy and sell them like "dime a

dozen punks," or greeting German naval commanders in green silk pajamas, Long personified the clever hero.[37] The effect is explained by Orrin E. Klapp:

> He [the clever hero] is upstart, rebel, lawbreaker, liar, thief, and malefactor; and yet in spite of being so--perhaps because of this--he is a social force.[38]

In other words, Huey Long was a hero for the same behavior for which he was indicted as a demagogue--it depended on one's social standing which view of him was held. For the intellectual and the wealthy, he represented the extreme danger to democracy. To the poor and disenfranchised, he was their patron saint, championing their cause, symbolizing their struggle.

The most easily recognizable distinction between the public figure and the demagogue is that the demagogue elicits from the public tremendous emotional reactions--both positive and negative.[39] The revered public figure may generate tremendous feeling as well, but it generally is of the hero-worship type. Controversy surrounds the demagogue, usually centering around not the specific merits of his programs, but around his worth as an individual. The question of whether the demagogue is good or evil, a man to be loved or hated, feared or worshipped, is paramount; thus most rhetoric about a demagogue is epideitic in character.

That Huey Long shared many qualities of the revered public figure has just been documented. That he also possessed the distinguishing qualities of the demagogue is easy to demonstrate. Long inspired extreme emotions in the public through his actions and his words, a point that has been amply proven here and in other studies. Williams' words are worth remembering: "Long was obviously the type of leader who excites violent antithetical emotions in people, even in those not closely associated with him."[40]

Second, the demagogue champions a single cause, while the revered public figure is much more diversified. The communist menace was Joseph

McCarthy's sole issue; when the issue died, he was finished as a political force. The identification of the demagogue with a single, simplified issue may expalin why it is virtually impossible for a demagogue to attain the White House. He simply lacks the adaptability and flexibility necessary to attract a wide enough following to win that political office. In his rapid rise to national prominence, the demagogue is stereotyped as a one-issue candidate, and the public finds it difficult to accept him as an authority in other areas.

Long also championed a single cause. Although peripheral issues to the redistribution of wealth and the Share Our Wealth program were occasionally mentioned, they were either integrated into his redistribution of wealth program, or were later deemphasized or dropped entirely.

Third, the public figure may spearhead a movement; the demagogue is the movement. That is, the man and his issue are so inextricably woven together that they become synonymous; the demagogue is a symbolic figure. To illustrate, the name "Joseph McCarthy" probably would bring instantaneous identification with "Red menace." Yet the name "John Kennedy" probably would trigger a wide variety of phrases, none of which would adequately describe the man or his policies and programs. In this manner, the demagogue resembles the founder of a religion. As Spencer writes, "The leader brings forth. . . a universe of values that creates the group. He is thus simultaneously an articulator and himself the primary symbol of the existence of the group."[41] With this man-as-movement characteristic, the demagogue, rightly or wrongly, is often viewed as a unidimensional rather than as a multidimensional personality.

Long and Share Our Wealth became inextricably linked. As its founder and chief spokesman, Long turned the program into a crusade, hoping that the

surge of pent up emotions resulting from the frustrations of the depression could sweep him into the White House. Williams, noting this fact, commented, "It was the promise in Share Our Wealth to abolish misery and poverty that drew people to its banner. Enough of them would come, Huey hoped, to elect him President."[42]

In sum, the revered public figure and the demagogue are similar in at least three important respects--they are mass leaders, charismatic, and heroic. Their differences are more a matter of degree but nevertheless critical in distinguishing the two classes. The demagogue elicits powerful antithetical emotional responses, he champions a single cause, and he and his issue become symbolically one idea, one driving force.

THE RISE OF DEMAGOGUERY

Situation and audience characteristics are so interrelated that to separate them for purposes of analysis is, by and large, a fruitless and counterproductive endeavor. One situational factor, however, must be taken as a presumption for demagogic rhetoric and demagogues to emerge: the existence of a democratic state. As James Fenimore Cooper wrote in The American Democrat, "The true theatre of a demagogue is a democracy."[43] Even in the case of Adolph Hitler, the state of Germany was democratic during his rise to power. Only after his assuming control of the existing political structure did he create a dictatorship. In an authoritarian state, there are no viable enemies of the government. Imprisonment, exile, and execution curb dissent and make demagoguery nonexistent. Revolutionary movements, if there are such, are typically carried underground.

Dictators and demagogues, thus, cannot be equated. A dictator's authority stems from his legitimate or coercive power; the demagogue's power rests

in his ability to win a following, a following that is determined by his rhetorical skill. Adolph Hitler was one of the few dictators with such awesome rhetorical power, and few would deny that this ability was a major source of his effectiveness. As Swing,[44] Burke,[45] and others have indicated, the experience of Adolph Hitler is a compelling reason why a demagogue must not hold high office, particularly the Presidency, for he can and does use "the institutions of democracy to crush democracy."[46]

The situational and audience factors necessary for the rise of demagoguery are subject to cyclical fluctuations. This fluctuation should be viewed metaphorically--as the push and pull of mind and heart, of intellect and emotion. This struggle within people and among people vacillates between the polarities, and the state of the conflict is an excellent predictor of the state of the society. At one end of the spectrum is the extreme empiricism of the logical positivists; at the other, the fundamental doctrines of the spiritualists. At one end, an emphasis on the individual and a value on heterogeneity; at the other, an emphasis on the group or community and a value on homogeneity. At one end, a reverence for science and an affirmation of intellectualism; at the other, a reverence for the spirit and an affirmation of anti-intellectualism.[47] Most of the time a society fluctuates between these extremes, but the closer a society moves in the direction of heart--of fundamentalism, homogeneity, anti-intellectualism, and spiritualism--the greater the probability for the rise of the demagogue.

At the root, perhaps, of audience response to the demagogue is economic dislocation--a significant disruption in the accustomed lifestyle of a significant body of individuals. This dislocation is not limited to the lower strata of a society, and the dislocation can be real or imagined, or, in many cases, some of both. Overt signs of disenfranchisement from the economic

system may be such factors as widespread unemployment, falling GNP, and malnourishment. But, as Kenneth Burke pointed out, the crux of any economic dislocation is a religious statement, and so too, the crux of any religious statement is an economic issue.[48]

When Huey Long delivered his "Every Man a King" address, the nation was in the throes of the Great Depression: currency was unstable, the national debt was ballooning, the GNP was declining, and unemployment was over 20% nationally. As the high unemployment figures and a concomitantly large number of small business bankruptcies indicate, the depression was not restricted to those who had little wealth to begin with; it cut a wide swath across the middle class as well. A general outrage existed against many large businesses and individuals who were seemingly taking advantage of the depression to increase their economic worth. And the overall economic situation in 1934 was rapidly worsening, not improving, and there appeared little chance of speedy recovery.[49]

People were afraid, angry, looking for someone or something to blame for their condition, yet were experiencing the religious revivalism started by Billy Sunday and continued by men such as Father Coughlin. The rhetorical situation and the audience were united by the dominance of heart over mind. Kenneth Burke explained the reason for this dominance when he observed, "A people in collapse, suffering under economic frustration and the defeat of nationalistic aspirations, with the very midrib of their integrative efforts . . . in a state of dispersion, have little other than some 'spiritual' basis to which they could refer their nationalistic dignity."[50]

Seizing upon an appropriately religious theme, Long, in the "Every Man a King" address, created an enemy in the very wealthy and proclaimed the Share Our Wealth program a panacea for economic ills and a method for con-

quering the demonic rich. The specific tactics employed in the speech and their psychological or "shaping" effect on the audience will be discussed in the third section of this paper.

ANALYZING DEMAGOGIC DISCOURSE

Demagogic discourse typically follows a classic psychological/motivational pattern for persuasion, as outlined in Kenneth Burke's Permanence and Change.[51] Its four stage development is illustrated below:

Guilt------>Victimization------>Redemption------>Salvation

Each of these four stages will be developed in terms of: (1) the rationale for each phase; (2) general themes that Huey Long employed to achieve each stage; (3) specific strategies utilized in the "Every Man a King" address to reinforce each stage.

Guilt. Any persuasive form presupposes some distance, be it intellectual or emotional, between the speaker and his audience. This distance is used by the speaker to create a sense of guilt on the part of his hearers. As Lowenthal and Guterman noted:

> The leader of a movement must first convince his audience that its ideas are inadequate for coping with the situation that produces its discontent. He cannot win adherents without in a sense humiliating them, that is, suggesting that they are inferior in knowledge, strength, or courage and that they need him more than he needs them.[52]

Generally, Long created guilt in his audience on two issues, both implicitly, not explicitly stated. First, Long capitalized on his audience's feelings of impotence and ignorance when compared with those in power, that they were inadequately equipped to provide answers to their own problems. Second, they were made to feel guilty for being poor, as if they should have material wealth and were responsible for their poverty. Out of these feelings of

guilt, anger and frustration naturally arose.

In the "Every Man a King" address, the audience experienced guilt for allowing their young children to be malnourished, to be needlessly denied the necessities of life. This image is consistent with the general religious attitude that the sins of the adult population are borne, not by the adults themselves, but by their offspring. The following excerpt from the speech illustrates how the image was developed:

> Is that right of life, my friends, when the young children of this country are being reared into a sphere which is more owned by 12 men than it is by 120,000,000 people?
>
> Is that, my friends, giving them a fair shake of the dice or anything like the inalienable right of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, or anything resembling the fact that all people are created equal, when we have today thousands and hundreds of thousands and millions of children on the verge of starvation in a land that is overflowing with too much to eat and too much to wear?[53]

Victimage. Once the audience feels sufficiently guilty, that guilt must be cancelled or shifted to the selection of a "sacrificial offering;"[54] in essence, an enemy. The relationship between guilt and victimization is developed by Lowenthal and Guterman:

> On the one hand the agitator brands his followers as suckers, harping on the suffering they have endured in their unsuccessful lives and thereby satisfying their latent masochism. On the other hand, he transforms this very humiliation into something to be proud of, a mark of the new elite he will eventually elevate. By projecting the responsibility for it on an unscrupulous and immoral enemy, he offers his followers a means of warding off in advance all future humiliations. The humiliation is simultaneously deepened and surrounded by a halo.[55]

As a rule, Huey Long selected two basic enemies on which the ills of the poor could be blamed. One, obviously, was the rich--they had deprived the poor what they rightfully deserved. And the other was the man ultimately responsible for decisions affecting the poor, Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

The method most suitable for realizing victimization is conspiracy. That is, once the audience perceives the enemy as consciously scheming to deny them what is rightfully theirs, the enemy becomes a demonic figure and the struggle against the enemy becomes a religious crusade.[56] The speaker can make effective use of stereotypes, or "devil terms," to reinforce the resentment already felt by the audience.[57] Additionally, the use of simple "parables" to illustrate the evils of the enemy should serve to connect the enemy with the guilt or resentment. The conspiracy must be kept simple--an emotional issue must not be complex, or its intensity wanes.[58]

In the "Every Man a King" address, the guilt created in the "suffering little children" image, far from causing gloom and despair, imparts a sense of intense righteous indignation, driving one to seek a cause for one's feelings of guilt. In essence, Long created a desire for a scapegoat, an enemy, a devil-figure. Long satisfied this motivational desire for a victim in the image of the conspiratorial wealthy. The development of this image occurred in two stages. The first identified the wealthy as the cause of the economic ills of the country. Early in the speech, Long pointed out:

> It is not the difficulty or the problem which we have; it is the fact that the rich people of this country--and by reach people I mean the super-rich--will not allow us to solve the problems, or rather the one little problem that is afflicting this country, because in order to cure all of our woes it is necessary to scale down the big fortunes, that we may scatter the wealth to be shared by all of the people.[59]

Mere attribution of causality, however, was insufficient to evoke intense feelings of hatred toward the rich. It was, therefore, essential that Long portray the wealthy as sinister, evil, demonic, conspiratorial--consciously oppressing the masses and perpetuating the suffering of the little children.[60] The following passage is illustrative of this second stage of the image's development:

> . . . the greed of a few men is such that they think it is necessary that they own everything, and their pleasure consists in the starvation of the masses, and in their possessing things they cannot use, and their children cannot use, but who bask in the splendor of sunlight and wealth, casting darkness and despair and impressing it on everyone else.[61]

The language in this passage casts the wealthy in a sinister pose--basking in "sunlight and wealth" while "casting darkness and despair." This archetypal light/dark metaphor is used frequently to villify the rich, and is a representative use of stereotype and "devil terms" to reinforce the resentment already held by the audience.[62]

The effect of an archetypal metaphor on an audience is further explained by Michael Osborn who observed, "Arising from the fundamental interests of men, they in turn activate basic motivational energies within an audience, and if successful turn such energies into a powerful current running in favor of the speaker's recommendations."[63] Similarly, the ideal psychological effect of the "conspiratorial wealthy" image is explained by Lowenthal and Guterman. They write, "By projecting the responsibility for it [guilt] on an unscrupulous and immoral enemy, he offers his followers a means of warding off in advance all future humiliations. The humiliation is simultaneously deepened and surrounded by a halo."[64]

For this state to be maximally reached, however, the image must be "perfected" or "purified."[65] For the image to be purified, it had to be "strong enough to account for the ubiquitiouness and omnipotence of his conspiracy in destroying the world to become its master."[66] Long demonstrated this demonic potential of the conspiratorial wealthy in a simple parable, illustrating the evils of the enemy, and serving to make the enemy responsible for the existing guilt and resentment felt by the audience:

> Now, my friends, if you were off on an island where there were 100 lunches, you could not let one man eat up the hundred lunches, or take the hundred lunches and not let anybody else eat any of them. If you did, there would not be anything else for the balance of the people to consume.
>
> So, we have in America today, my friends, a condition by which about 10 men dominate the means of activity in at least 85 per cent of the activities that you own. . . .[67]

To fight this powerful, heartless enemy was an awesome task, one that required more than a strictly "logical" foundation. Long had to provide a spiritual basis for fighting the conspiratorial wealthy, and he did so in the form of scriptural justification. That is, Long sanctioned retribution against the wealthy not merely on economic or even humanitarian grounds, but also on philosophical and religious precedent. Citing the Bible and Greek philosophers, Long observed:

> But the Lord gave his law, and in the Book of James . . . it was written that when the rich hold goods they could not use and could not consume, you will inflict punishment on them, and nothing but days of woe ahead of them . . . .
>
> . . . Read what Plato said; that you must not let any one man be too poor, and you must not let any one man be too rich; that the same mill that grinds out the extra rich is the mill that will grind out the extra poor, because, in order that the extra rich can become so affluent, they must necessarily take more of what ordinarily would belong to the average man.[68]

To this point in the address, Long had capitalized on a sense of guilt in his audience, had articulated the basis of the evil, had created and perfected an enemy responsible for the guilt feelings, and had justified, theologically and philosophically, retribution against the enemy.

Redemption. Once the audience has been awakened to the conspiracy and has sufficiently strong feelings against the enemy, the speaker must provide an alternative--i.e., supply the means to eliminate the enemy. Essentially, the audience must be redeemed. By accepting the speaker's alternatives, the

audience is simultaneously cleansed of their guilt and vindicated in their persecution of the enemy.[69]

Huey Long's plan of redemption was his "Share Our Wealth" program. By redistributing wealth and guaranteeing an annual income to all, it purged the audience of their guilt feelings and justified their rejection of F.D.R. and the wealthy.

The preferable techniques for communicating the redemptive qualities of the proposal are the use of "god terms" and over-simplification. Whereas "devil terms" evoke strong emotional responses against the enemy, "god terms" evoke a positive response toward the advocated position. The use of over-simplification makes the proposal easy for the audience to understand, or to think they understand. The effectiveness of this strategy is grudingly admitted by Charles Lomas:

> The demagogue also believes in simplicity, but he carries it to absurdity; he oversimplifies and, as a result, his audiences understand him well. He seems to be merely stating the obvious, but in reality he is substituting prejudice and half-truth for fact. In much the same way Huey Long could win votes by speaking in the homespun language of back country Louisiana and by proposing to "Share the Wealth" of the country among all the people. In a gross oversimplification, he treated wealth as if it consisted of idle dollars in the bank, requiring only simple arithmetic to secure an equitable distribution.[70]

In the "Every Man a King" address, the retribution against the wealthy was to take place in the redemptive promise of Share Our Wealth. Not only was Share Our Wealth a proposal to redistribute wealth, but in doing so it also provided a means to eliminate the rich, a means of redemption from guilt. By accepting Long's alternatives, the audience was both cleansed of their guilt and vindicated in their pursuit of the enemy.[71] Share Our Wealth provided the means of redemption, but the audience had to commit themselves

to the means of grace to be redeemed. Thus, joining the Share Our Wealth society (with its promise of redemption) was a dominant theme in the speech. The cleansing qualities of the society are explicated in the following statement by Long:

> This is Huey P. Long talking, United States Senator, Washington, D.C. Write me and let me send you the data on this proposition. Let us make known to the people what we are going to do. . . . Share Our Wealth societies are now being organized, and people have it within their power to relieve themselves from this terrible situation.[72]

Salvation. The final stage of persuasion is for the audience to be "saved." Since the redemption phase provides the means for salvation, it only remains for the speaker to ensure the successful implementation of the proposal. The speaker has already shown the audience the Way and the Truth; he now must show them the Light. In effect, for the movement to be successful, its leader must be accepted as not merely an authority figure, but as a god-figure. Gerald L. K. Smith, one of Long's chief campaigners, remarked:

> No great movement has ever succeeded unless it has deified some one man. The Share-the-Wealth movement consciously deified Huey P. Long.[73]

In creating this image, the leader must engage in discourse fitting that of a deity. He must be viewed as a man of uncompromising principle, of sound judgment, and of limitless wisdom. A favorite method of demonstrating the latter is the emulation of Jesus' parables--the wise son and the fool, the unforgiving servant, the Good Samaritan.[74]

In the "Every Man a King" address, Long had already demonstrated his uncompromising principle and his "sound" judgment in his program of Share Our Wealth (even though Schlesinger and others demonstrated its unworkability[75]). His limitless wisdom was illustrated in the many parables he narrated and

Scriptural justifications he employed. In addition, Long demonstrated himself as a man of vision as he described the state of euphoria, the heaven-on-earth that would result from membership in Share Our Wealth. All free, all equal, every man a king:

> Every man a king, so there would be no such thing as a man or woman who did not have the necessities of life, who would not be dependent on the whims and caprices and ipsi dixit of the financial martyrs for a living.
>
> 'Every man a king.' Every man to eat when there is something to eat; all to wear something when there is something to wear. That makes us all a soverign.[76]

Long's skill in leading the audience from guilt, to victimage, to redemption, to salvation, given the state of the economy and the relationship between mind and heart, must account at least in part for the overwhelming success of the address.

A final, overall characteristic of demagogic discourse warrants attention. Ideally, demagogic rhetoric should develop a strong unification theme, a plea that encompasses both the spiritual and geographical unity of the movement. Any religious movement requires a spiritual bond between the leader and members; if the link is broken, the movement dies. Often overlooked, however, is the important role of unity within the movement. If internal identity is lacking, the movement may die from within.

Huey Long's predominant concern in the "Every Man a King" address was not to create a deified image of himself--that would come later.[77] Instead, he concentrated on creating a group identify for the Share Our Wealth members and prospective members.

Long created a spiritual identity by the use of identification by antithesis; that is, "by some opposition shared in common."[78] The opposition was the conspiratorial enemy, who served, as scapegoat, "to deflect attention from possible malefactors within one's camp."[79]

From another perspective, Long sought to create a "restricted code" within his program; that is, to create a gap between sharers and nonsharers of the code.[80] He accomplished this task by establishing a "we/they" dichotomy. "We" were the framers of the Share Our Wealth (although in reality Long was the only framer), the champions of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, and responsible citizens determined to rectify the inequitable distribution of wealth in the United States. "They" were the evildoers, the enemy, the "super-rich" who had consciously schemed to oppress the poor, to deny the people their inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Thus, the "I" of individual membership became subordinate to the "we" of group membership, and the value of homogeneity was affirmed. The tactic also had the quality of alienating "them," making the enemy even more hostile than before. The tactic was effective, for it gave Long an enemy of ever-increasing proportions, one capable of being "perfected."

Not only was there a need for spiritual unity, but for geographical unity as well. For Adolph Hitler, the geographic center was Munich; for Share Our Wealth it was Long's office in Washington, D.C. The importance of a mecca is explained by Kenneth Burke, who argued, "Every movement that would recruit its followers from among many discordant and divergent bands, must have some spot towards which all roads lead. Each man may get there in his own way, but it must be the one unifying center of research for all.[81]

Huey Long not only created a spot where all roads led, but heavily publicized its Washington, D.C. location. Near the close of the speech, Long remarked:

> This is Huey P. Long talking, United States Senator, Washington, D.C. Write me and let me send you the data on this proposition. Enroll with us. Let us make known to the people what we are going to do. I will send you a

> button, if I have got enough of them left. We have got a little button that some of our friends designed, with a message around the rim of the button, and in the center, 'Every man a king.' Many thousands of them are meeting through the United States, and every day we are getting hundreds and hundreds of letters. . . .[82]

The significance of the identification between geographic locale and the individual member is unmistakable. Adolph Hitler concluded, "Only the presence of such a center . . . can at length give a movement that force which is rooted in the inner unity and in the recognition of a hard that represents this unity."[83] The dominance of the unification theme can be traced directly to the we/they dichotomy and the geographical structure of the movement.

This paper has argued for a revamped look at demagogues and demagogic discourse. Greater attention must be paid to the character of the demagogue and the situational factors which surround his rise in order to better understand his rhetoric. Moreover, this essay has attempted to describe the characteristics of demagogic discourse and detail a methodology appropriate for its analysis in both general terms and in the specific case of Huey Long's "Every Man a King" address.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Kenneth Burke, "The Rhetoric of Hitler's 'Battle'," in Robert L. Scott and Bernard L. Brock, (eds.), Methods of Rhetorical Criticism: A Twentieth Century Perspective (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), p. 239.

[2]e.g., Charles W. Lomas, "The Rhetoric of Demagoguery," Western Speech Journal, 25 (Summer, 1961), 160-168; Charles W. Lomas, "The Agitator in American Politics," Western Speech Journal, 24 (Spring 1960), 76-83; Mary G. McEdwards, "Agitative Rhetoric: Its Nature and Effect," Western Speech Journal, 32 (Winter 1968), 36-43.

[3]e.g., Elton Abernathy, "Huey Long: Oratorical 'Wealth-Sharing'," Southern Speech Journal, 21 (Winter 1955), 87-102; Ernest G. Bormann, "A Rhetorical Analysis of the National Radio Broadcasts of Senator Huey Pierce Long," Speech Monographs, 24 (November 1957), 244-257.

[4]Edwin Black, Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method (New York, 1965), pp. 114-125.

[5]Much of this section is borrowed from a previous convention paper written by the author.

[6]Lomas, "Rhetoric," 169-168.

[7]T. Harry Williams, Huey Long (New York: Knopf, 1969), pp. ix-x.

[8]Williams, pp. 414-416.

[9]Lomas, "Agitator," 76-83.

[10]Burton J. Hotaling, "Huey P. Long as Journalist and Propagandist," Journalism Quarterly, XX (1943), 26.

[11]Harnett T. Kane, Louisiana Hayride (New York: William Morrow, 1941), p. 126.

[12]Kane, pp. 126-127.

[13]Martin E. Spencer, "What is Charisma?," British Journal of Sociology, 24 (September 1973), 341.

[14]Spencer, "Charisma," 345.

[15]Spencer, 347.

[16]For example, Long possessed the mastery of the sage and the revolutionary leader.

[17]Spencer, 345.

[18]Spencer, 346.

[19]Spencer, 346-347.

[20]Long's brother Julius, for example, was quoted by Schlesinger (p. 60) as stating, "The only sincerity there was in him was for himself."

[21]Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., The Age of Roosevelt, Vol. III: The Politics of Upheaval (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1960), p. 60.

[22]Spencer, 347.

[23]Spencer, 347.

[24]Spencer, 348.

[25]Spencer, 348.

[26]Raymond Gram Swing, Forerunners of American Fascism (New York: Julian Messner, 1935), p. 88.

[27]Spencer, 347.

[28]Orrin E. Klapp, "Hero Worship in America," American Sociological Review, XIV (February, 1949), 54, note 4.

[29]Williams, pp. 700-701.

[30]Klapp, "Hero Worship," 54.

[31]Orrin E. Klapp, "The Folk Hero," Journal of American Folklore, LXII (January, 1949), 19-20.

[32]Orrin E. Klapp, "The Clever Hero," Journal of American Folklore, LXVII (January 1954), 21.

[33]Klapp, "Folk Hero," 20.

[34]Klapp, "Folk Hero," 21.

[35]Klapp, "Folk Hero," 21-22.

[36]Klapp, "Folk Hero," 22.

[37]Schlesinger, Upheaval, p. 42.

[38]Klapp, "Clever Hero," 21.

[39]Williams, p. ix.

[40]Williams, p. ix.

[41]Spencer, 346.

[42]Williams, pp. 700-701.

[43]Cited in Richard H. Rovere, Senator Joe McCarthy (New York: Harcourt, 1959), p. 45.

[44]Swing, Forerunners.

[45]Burke, "Battle."

[46]Kane, p. 4.

[47]Richard Hofstadter, Anti-intellectualism in American Life (New York: Knopf, 1963), pp. 1-80.

[48]Kenneth Burke, The Rhetoric of Religion (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), p. 293.

[49]According to the Department of Labor, unemployment was projected to rise in 1934 at a faster rate than in previous years; estimates of total numbers out of work went as high as 43 million.

[50]Kenneth Burke, Permanence and Change, 2d ed. (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965), pp. 274-294.

[51]Burke, Permanence, pp. 274-294.

[52]Leo Lowenthal and Norbert Guterman, Prophets of Deceit, 2d. ed. (Palo Alto, Calif.: Pacific Books, 1970), p. 20.

[53]Huey P. Long, "Every Man a King," in Congressional Record, 78 (March 1, 1934), 3451.

[54]Burke, Permanence, p. 284.

[55]Lowenthal and Guterman, Deceit, p. 23.

[56]Richard Hofstadter, "The Paranoid Style in American Politics," in The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), p. 32.

[57]McEdwards, "Rhetoric," 37.

[58]Lomas, "Demagoguery," 165.

[59]Long, 3451.

[60]Hofstadter, "Paranoid," p. 32.

[61]Long, 3451.

[62]McEdwards, "Agitative Rhetoric," p. 37.

[63]Michael Osborn, "Archetypal Metaphor in Rhetoric: The Light/Dark Family," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 33 (1967), 116.

[64]Lowenthal and Guterman, Deceit, p. 23.

[65]Burke, "Battle," p. 249.

[66]Burke, "Battle," p. 250.

[67]Long, 3451.

[68]Long, 3451.

[69]Burke, Permanence, pp. 284-286.

[70]Lomas, "Demagoguery," p. 163.

[71]Burke, Permanence, pp. 284-286.

[72]Long, 3452.

[73]Schlesinger, Upheaval, p. 64.

[74]Klapp, "Clever Hero," 23-31.

[75]Schlesinger, Upheaval, p. 63.

[76]Long, 3452.

[77]Schlesinger, Upheaval, p. 64.

[78]Burke, "Situation," p. 286.

[79]Burke, "Situation," p. 286.

[80]Basil Bernstein, Class, Codes, and Control (London: Schocken, 1971), p. 148.

[81]Burke, "Battle," p. 239.

[82]Long, 3452.

[83]Adolph Hitler, Mein Kampf, quoted in Burke, "Battle," p. 240.